

IELTS Writing test – Preparing your students for success



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ETAS 38th Annual Conference 2022



- 9 – Expert user
- 8 – Very good user
- 7 – Good user
- 6 – Competent user
- 5 – Modest user
- 4 – Limited user
- 3 – Extremely limited user
- 2 – Intermittent user
- 1 – Non-user
- 0 – Did not attempt the test



IELTS Scores



ACADEMIC

GENERAL TRAINING

Listening



30 minutes
4 sections, 40 questions

Reading



60 minutes
3 sections, 40 questions

60 minutes
3 sections, 40 questions

Writing



60 minutes
2 tasks

60 minutes
2 tasks

Speaking



11 - 14 minutes
3 parts

TOTAL TEST TIME
2 hours 44 minutes
+ 10 minutes transfer time*

*Paper-based IELTS only

Writing

how your students are scored



25%
Grammatical range
and accuracy



25%
Lexical resource



25%
Task achievement/response



25%
Coherence and
cohesion

Planning

Planning

- saves time in the long run
- helps Ss to avoid mistakes
- enables Ss to have a clear structure to their task
- encourages Ss to think about the structures they will use in the task

****** A well-planned writing task gives your Ss the best chance of success & training begins in the classroom.

Train your students to plan efficiently

- *Task 1* (150 words) – 20 mins (20 points)

Recommended – 5 minutes planning – 13 minutes writing – 2 minutes read through to check for errors.

- *Task 2* (250 words) – 40 mins (40 points)

Recommended – 10 minutes planning – 27 minutes writing – 3 minutes read through to check to errors.

WRITING

Task 1



Task 1 Overview – General & Academic

Academic:

- A report on one of the following: graph, bar chart, pie chart, line graph
- Describing a process using visuals given in the task

General:

- A formal letter (e.g. a letter of complaint)
- An informal letter (e.g. to a friend asking for advice)
- A semi-formal letter (e.g. to a former teacher asking for a letter of reference)

Preparing your student for Task 1

- Planning

At the beginning of each lesson – give the Ss a Task 1 question. Give them 5 minutes to identify the key points. Ss then compare their ideas in pairs & discuss in the group. The more Ss go through this process, the better they become.

Task achievement:

To get a 6, students need to ‘present and highlight key features’ If they don’t do this, they can’t get higher than a 5 for this task.

Overview – Academic Task 1

After Ss have finished writing a Task One, show them three different overviews & get them to choose the best one. Try to show them one that doesn't include all the key points, another that has too much detail, & a perfect one. Ss then identify the perfect one & discuss why the others were not perfect. Students might not realise how important it is to write a good overview.

Task Achievement:

To get a 6, students need to 'present an overview with information appropriately selected'. If they don't do this, they can't get higher than a 5.

Lexical Resource

Ss complete the task. Write the key words from the rubric on the board & get them to brainstorm synonyms & parallel expressions in pairs. This helps the Ss to realise how important it is to **paraphrase**. It also helps develop awareness of how to do it. Afterwards, write the best examples on the board & Ss put them in their vocabulary books.

Lexical Resource

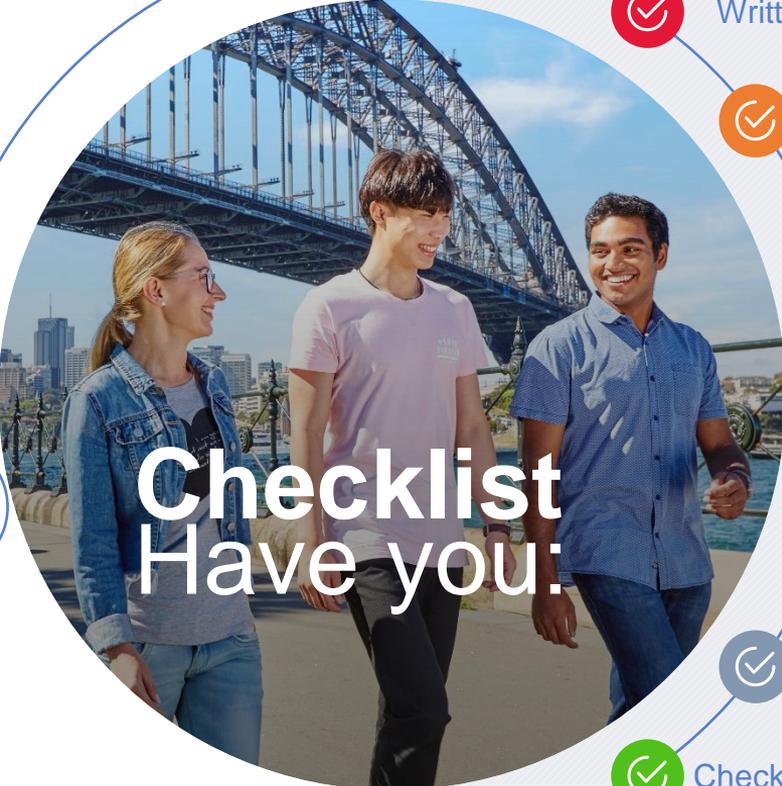
To get a 6, students need to use an 'adequate range of vocabulary' If they just use the words from the rubric or repeat similar words, it's unlikely they'll get higher than a 5.

Grammatical Range & Accuracy

Many Ss have problems using articles (a/an/the), one idea is to show them a model answer with all articles taken out & get them to add the articles wherever they think they need to go. This activity can be done in pairs & Ss then explain why they think articles should/shouldn't be used. Try to use tricky nouns that often come up in IELTS writing tasks such as: the government/internet, a sharp rise/fall etc

Grammatical Range & Accuracy

As articles are used in every sentence, if a student makes mistakes with them, it's likely they'll make 'frequent grammatical errors', which would mean they get a 5 for this.



Checklist Have you:



Written at least 150 words?



Included an overview of the information?



Selected the most important information?



Supported your points with figures/examples?



Made effective comparisons?



Used linking words to connect your points?



Organised key points into paragraphs?



Checked for mistakes in grammar or spelling?

TASK

2

WRITING
General &
Academic



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Task 2 – General & Academic (250 words)

- An opinion essay
- A discussion essay
- An advantage/disadvantage essay
- A solution essay
- A direct question essay

What is important to think about when completing Writing Task 2?

- Planning
- Timing
- Paraphrasing the task
- Paragraphing
- Layout
- Spelling
- A good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures.
- Linking words
- Sequencing words/phrases
- Read the task
- Not focusing on 'wonderful' ideas!
- Academic/Formal tone
- Punctuation

Introduction – Paraphrasing is key

- Ss need to focus on learning how to paraphrase the task for the introduction.
- **Activity:** Rephrase the following proverbs:
 - a. A picture is worth a thousand words
 - b. An apple a day keeps the doctor away
 - c. A stitch in time, saves nine.

[IELTS Vocabulary: Paraphrasing Tips \(ieltsliz.com\)](https://ieltsliz.com)

Paraphrasing continued...

- Give the Ss a series of typical Task 2 questions – Ss highlight the key words. Ss then spend time researching synonyms and report back to the class.
- Class discussion on which are appropriate synonyms.
- **Silent Whispers** – Ss sit in a circle & the first S is given a Task 2 question. They whisper it to their neighbour who has to then substitute some of the words to their neighbour. This continues around the class until the last person says the question aloud & it is compared with the original.
- Online ss could use What's app

Planning

Question

"A person's worth nowadays seems to be judged according to social status and material possessions. Old-fashioned values, such as honour, kindness and trust, no longer seem important."

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

Plan

Introduction

- paraphrase question
- my opinion – don't agree

Paragraph 1

- celebrities today – admired for their wealth and possessions and this gives them a certain position in society
- their lifestyles are not exemplary – can see in the media that they cheat on their spouses or over indulge in drugs and alcohol with little regard for other people
- despite this behaviour they are admired by millions of people

Paragraph 2

- majority of people don't act like celebrities and value trust and honour
- people want loving relationships both with friends and families and successful relationships at work so adhere to traditional values to do this
- The media also reports examples of people who act badly suggesting this is not the norm

Conclusion

- true that a lot of people do measure value in terms of personal possessions and wealth
- at the same time, traditional values are still important to the majority of the population

Brainstorming ideas – For & Against

Activity:

- Give students a Task 2 rubric for an advantages & disadvantages essay.
- Ss sit together in groups & write their thoughts on the topic on paper giving reasons. They share their ideas with the rest of the group & then others comment on their ideas. This task should be done without speaking, just writing to communicate their ideas.
- Finally, the Ss share their ideas with the rest of the class.

Text organisation:

- Give Ss essays with topic sentences missing – Ss supply possible topic sentences & discuss with each other, which one/s are appropriate & which not so good.
- Give Ss a completed essay question with the ideas in the main paragraphs jumbled up. Students need to re-organise the ideas to create a coherent, cohesive essay.
- Stick topic sentences on large sheets of paper around the room, Ss go up & add possible supporting sentences &/or examples. (You could use Google Jamboard for this online)



uestions?

Thanks for participating!

For more information on IELTS in Switzerland please go to:

www.ielts.ch



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